FROM UNILLILLION TO ULTIMILLILLION

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In the August 1975 and February 1976 issues of Word Ways, John Candelaria proposed a very large extension of my number nomenclature described in the November 1968 Word Ways. Although I am in general agreement with the principles he has used to extend the number names, I am much bothered by one aspect: the introduction of the repeated milli- prefix each time the log period of the number increases by a factor of 1000.

For readers not familiar with the earlier articles, the period of a number is defined as (number of zeroes) = 3(period) + 3, so that, for example, one billion has a period of two. Because the period of a number can itself be a very large number, it is convenient to introduce the log period, taken to the base ten. In the numbers I introduce below, even the log period becomes unwieldy, and it is necessary to introduce the exponent of the log period, denoted by n in the relationship (log period) = $3(1000)^n$. Putting all this together,

$$\text{number of zeroes} = 3(10^{3(1000)^n}) + 3$$

I propose to replace Candelaria's millillion (with log period 3000) by unillillion, his decilli-millillion (with log period 30000) by deci-unillillion, and his centilli-millillion (with log period 300000) by centi-unillillion. In my table below, the exponent is given to the left of the number name:

1	unillillion	18	octonidenillillion
2	binillillion	19	novenidenillillion
3	ternillillion	20	vicenillillion
4	quaternillillion	21	univicenillillion
5	quinillillion	22	binivicenillillion
6	senillillion	30	tricenillillion
7	septenillillion	40	quadragenillillion
8	octonillillion	50	quinquagenillillion
9	novenillillion	60	sexagenillillion
10	denillillion	70	septuagenillillion
11	undenillillion	80	octogenillillion
12	duodenillillion	90	nonagenillillion
13	terdenillillion	100	centenillillion
14	quaterdenillillion	101	unicentenillillion
15	quinidenillillion	110	denicentenillillion
16	senidenillillion	200	ducenillillion
17	septenidenillillion	300	trecenillillion

400	quadringenillillion	800	octingenillillion
500	quingenillillion	900	nongenillillion
600	sexcenillillion	1000	ultimillillion
700	septingenillillion		

With this extension, the number system exceeds a number of previously-named giants, such as Archimedes' largest number, Kasner's googolplex, Skewes' number and Candelaria's googoltriplex. However, one still cannot reach the mega or megiston; although the largest number in the table is gigantic by any reasonable standard, it is still infinitesimal in size compared to the Steinhaus numbers.

NO MORE SEX IN FRANCE?

That's right, no more sex -- or, for that matter, disc jockeys, hamburgers or discounts -- after the end of the year, if a new law recently pushed through by super-patriot Gaullist deputies to stop "the undermining of the French cultural heritage" is generally obeyed. The French have long watched with uneasiness as hundreds of English-language words (starting with "beefsteak" at least 200 years ago) have infiltrated the language, but not until 1976 did they take legal action to roll back the tide. Specifically, the use of most foreign words in French commerce and advertising will be banned, to be replaced by acceptable French-language equivalents. As might be expected, French businessmen, particularly those who have invested in such tangibles as electric signs or bottle labels, strongly resist the change. Said one, "The problem is that English is a crisp selling language and French is not. Saying a thing in French takes more words and sounds square." He may have a point -- pate a macher doesn't have quite the same bounce as chewing gum. Whoever heard of a disc jockey called an animateur? Will a hair-styling set sell as well if it is called a secheur avec accessoires? (D.H.F.)